

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13 and 16 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the features of claims 2 and 11 have been incorporated into claims 1 and 10, respectively, claims 2 and 11 have been canceled, and the features of original claims 1 and 10 have been incorporated into claims 3 and 12, respectively.

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; (c) does not add any additional claims; and (d) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

An Election of Species was required in this application. Accordingly, Applicants elected Figure 2. Applicants also asserted that claims 1-3, 7, 10 and 12 are readable on elected Figure 2 and that at least claims 1 and 10 are generic to all species. Applicants also assert that claim 11 is also readable on Figure 2 and recites features similar to allowable claim 2.

By this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 1 and 10 to include the features of claims 2 and 11, respectively, and amend claims 3 and 12 into independent form and assert that claims 1, 3, 7, 10 and 12 read on elected Figure 2. Claims 1 and 10 also remain generic to claims 4, 8, 13 and 16. Applicants respectfully request rejoinder of claims 4, 8, 13 and 16 should claims 1 and 10 be allowed because claims 1 and 10 remain generic to claims 4, 8, 13 and 16, and thus would be allowable for the same reasons that claims 1 and 10 are allowable.


Applicants appreciate the indication of allowability for claims 2, 3, 7 and 12. Applicants also assert that claim 11 is allowable for the same reasons that claim 2 is allowable. Accordingly, by this Amendment, Applicants incorporate the features of claims 2 and 11 into claims 1 and 10, respectively, and amend claims 3 and 12 into independent form.

Claims 1 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Besnard, U. S. Patent No. 3,576,044. The rejection has been rendered moot by the incorporation of allowable claim 2 into claim 1 and by the incorporation of claim 11, which recites features similar to claim 2, into claim 10. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13 and 16 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Scott M. Schulte
Registration No. 44,325

JAO:SMS/sxb

Date: September 9, 2004

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--